

criticisms. His constructive suggestions for the training of the prospective teacher include the provision of Secondary Education from the age of 11 to 17 or 18 years: "A year's actual teaching in responsible charge from 17 to 18, in special cases extended to two years." A two years' training in the Science and Art of Teaching, with further qualification in some special direction with additional study and training for work of special responsibility. Mr. Pickles' suggestion amounts to the common-sense plan of "trying out" the prospective teacher before committing the State to the heavy expenditure of training him, in contradistinction to the avowed and wasteful policy of the Board of Education of training first and rejecting afterwards. Mr. Pickles' address will attract to itself considerable attention. In a passage of significance Mr. Pickles says:—

The Teacher representatives on Education Committees in Lancashire, with the officers of the Lancashire County Teachers' Association, say that the student teacher year affords a reasonable period of probationary service for fitness for the teaching profession, and would obviate the unpleasant necessity of making an adverse report after years spent at College; and they asked the National Union of Teachers to consider its policy in this matter.

A New Type of Headmistress.

Mrs. Houston Crawford, wife of Brigadier-General J. A. Houston Crawford, has been appointed to be the first Headmistress of the new Weston Birt School, near Tetbury, at a salary of £500 per annum, with a capitation fee of £3 3s. 0d. Mrs. Crawford was selected from more than a hundred applicants, three of whom were Headmistresses of Secondary Schools of considerable standing. Mrs. Crawford is probably the first Headmistress without any previous experience of school work of any kind whatever, and has been selected largely on the grounds of outstanding personality and of a wide experience in the Girl Guide movement. The Duchess of Atholl supported Mrs. Crawford's appointment. This should be an experiment of far reaching significance. We see no reason why the appointing body should not find abundant cause for congratulation in its bold policy. Qualities are more than qualifications: a fresh personality of infinitely greater value than conformation to type. Is "scientific pedagogy" as important a thing as it is held to be? The success of a headmistress presumably unaffected by the complexities of the psycho-analysts: possibly innocent of the nomenclatures of the psychologist and untouched by the formal hand of the training college system would be—we hope will be—a pointer to the over-developed enthusiasms of training devotees, possibly to the administrative staff of the Board of Education, and even to the Minister for Education himself. We hope that the Parliamentary Secretary for Education will follow with close interest the history of this school and bring its lessons into association with the policies of that Department of State which she adorns.

Notice of Dismissal to Welsh Teachers.

As we go to press we learn that a meeting was held on Wednesday at Aberlilly where a Committee appointed, with the consent of the Ministry of Health, to deal with the financial position of the town, decided to give notice to head and assistant teachers who had refused to accept a 10 per cent. salary cut. Head teachers were given three months' notice and all other teachers one month. At a mass meeting of teachers it was unanimously decided to place the whole case unreservedly in the hands of the National Union of Teachers. Mr. Goldstone, the Secretary, in an interview, has said: "There is no doubt the Executive will support the local teachers, as to accept the proposals would amount to a breach in the National Award."

Essex and Greater London.

COST OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES.

The Housing Committee of the London County Council, in a report submitted to the Council on Tuesday, refer to statements "made in public at a recent meeting of the Essex County Council generally with regard to the expenditure which that Authority has to bear in the provision of educational facilities for the large population introduced into Essex by reason of the rapid development of the Council's Becontree housing estate, and particularly with regard to the prices charged to the Essex County Council for sites for schools on the estate."

The Committee point out that the basis to be adopted in fixing prices for school sites was agreed between the Ministry of Health and the London County Council as follows: (1) Cost of acquisition of land, including compensation for disturbance, tenant right, etc.; (2) cost of roads and sewers on which the site abuts; (3) overhead charges—10 per cent., later reduced to 5 per cent.; and (4) legal costs.

On the general question of the duty placed upon the Essex County Council of providing educational facilities for the new population in its area at Becontree, the Housing Committee states: "We would point out that the need for such facilities is a result of the inevitable spreading outwards of the population of London. It is true that, in the space of a few years, Becontree has been changed from what was practically open country into a new town, and, while heavy expenditure has to be incurred in providing educational as well as other local government services, the increased receipts from rates must be taken into account. Furthermore, it is to be borne in mind that in Essex, as elsewhere, at least 50 per cent. of the cost of the local education services is borne by the National Exchequer."

"The Council's position at Becontree is, of course, merely that of the landlord of a large estate. On the other hand, the difficulties experienced by the Essex County Council have arisen largely owing to the circumstances of local government in Greater London. Before the Royal Commission on London Government in 1922, suggestions were outlined which, if adopted, would have resulted in Becontree forming part of a Greater London area for local government purposes requiring central organisation, while reserving to the Local Authorities autonomy in local matters. Nearly all the other Local Authorities, including the Essex County Council, opposed these suggestions, and the main report of the Royal Commission was not in favour of them. Difficulties arising in connection with local administration in the course of the development of Becontree must, however, be purely transitory. Becontree, when fully developed, will have a population of some 130,000, and it may be anticipated that the changes which so large a development must effect in local government arrangements will secure satisfactory arrangements for the service of education."

Intercommunication.

NOTE.—Education is confined to party, no class, no sect; it is therefore intended to throw open these columns as widely as possible. Letters from any of our readers on points of general interest will be welcome. It must, however, be distinctly understood that we do not hold ourselves responsible for any of the views or opinions which may be expressed.

THE PRESIDENT AND THE LEAVING AGE.

SIR PERCY JACKSON REPLIES.

To the Editor of EDUCATION.

Sir,—We are all extremely obliged to the President of the Board of Education for the very valuable information and figures he has put forward in Circular 1395. It puts the case for the education of our children beyond the age of 11 in the Elementary Schools in a very clear and concise manner. There are several points which arise which I think need further consideration; for instance, that part of the President's statement which deals with Modern Schools being provided by voluntary bodies.

Competing Modern Schools.

The President said: "As I read the Hadow Report, the Committee wisely assumed that the voluntary bodies would themselves deal with older children in their Schools." This scarcely appears to agree with the general tenor of Paragraph 198 of the Hadow Report. His statement, taken as it stands, might easily imply the setting up of competing Modern Schools or of competing Senior Departments in areas in which such action would be wasteful in the way of expense, and mischievous as regards loss of efficiency. The Hadow Report says:—

"If they" [the voluntary societies and managers] "promote arrangements for the satisfaction of their needs in such Modern Schools controlled by the Public Authority, they will be aiding the better education of the youth of England at its most crucial stage of development, and they will be aiding thereby the betterment of England at large. If they oppose the transference of children to Modern Schools and prefer their retention up to the age of 14 in Senior Classes conducted in Elementary Schools, they will be hindering the growth of Modern Schools, with all their possibilities, and they may also be hindering the highest development of the children themselves."

I certainly cannot contemplate voluntary bodies to any extent competing in Modern Schools or Senior Departments. We shall never get really ahead with the programme that the President outlines until we have made a settlement of dual control; but I think I see signs on the horizon of a spirit of agreement coming along, and I am hoping a great deal from the Archbishops' Commission, of which Sir Henry Hadow is Chairman. The problem is indicated by the evident determination of the Board to insist on a radical re-organisation of Schools so as to ensure that every child of 11 plus shall be transferred either to a special building, or to a separate and special section of the School in which he has been taught up to that age. This insistence brings to the fore

requirements especially in the way of accommodation for practical instruction.

The general transfer, even without a change in the school leaving age, must mean that the Senior Departments or Sections shall be adequately supplied with accommodation for wood and metal work, domestic work and simple elementary science. This is the great need, along with the supply of Teachers, that we have to keep our minds fixed upon. In the rural areas it means that out of every four or five villages one School must be selected to which must be added rooms for the handwork and simple elementary science that are indicated, at a cost of about £1,200. In Urban Centres, similar rooms, or a new School, will in many cases be required. Unless we have this provision it is very little use contemplating moving children at the age of 11 or extending the school age to 15 plus.

Most Authorities, I suppose, are turning their attention in this direction, but how many of them have gone far beyond putting a scheme upon paper, or even have got as far as that. If the provision of these rooms is a vital necessity for the education of the adolescent, would it not be sound sense to build the required provision for the number of children we shall ultimately have staying in school to the age of 15 instead of making that provision now for children to the age of 14, and then beginning a few years later, to add further accommodation when we have decided to raise the school age? The school age is sure to be raised sooner or later, and it would be sound economy to make the preparation at once rather than have to patch up additions a few years later. Until much has been done towards remedying the deficiencies in the way of suitable rooms for wood and metal work, domestic work and simple science, even transfer to special Senior Departments would lose a good deal of its justification.

Surplus Accommodation.

The numbers quoted by the President in the third paragraph of his letter are certainly large, but it is quite possible that too much stress might be laid on them. The 600,000 children divide themselves into about 150,000 representing the temporary bulge in numbers passing through the Elementary Schools, and approximately 450,000 caused by raising, by an added year, the upper age limit for compulsory attendance. It should be remembered first that the numbers are divided amongst practically all the Education Authorities in the country, and, further, that in some areas there is at present surplus ordinary accommodation such as would adequately provide for the small proportions of the bulge which apply to those areas individually, as well as for a part at least of the increase in numbers which would be caused by raising the school age. We certainly ought not to provide for the temporary bulge in numbers. For two years we should have overcrowding—that is certain—but